their " slowness was known to all men.[51]* With the phlegmatic Briton, slowness of mind is apt to be taken as an indication of soundness of judgment.

But when you are confronted with a situation for which there is no precedent and where therefore experience does not count as much as inventiveness, audacity and celerity of decision, such men are a hindrance to effective action. Their experience often tangles them. And on the other hand, their thorough knowledge of the details of the business and their high reputation give them authority which it is difficult for the amateur to set aside or to challenge.

In an emergency the able but unimaginative expert is a public danger. In dealing with them Sir Edward Carson's forensic gifts could not be brought into full play. He could hardly cross-examine his First Sea Lord and show him up in the presence of his colleagues as if he were a hostile witness. A peremptory order might produce the resignation of the whole Board. A serious crisis might thus be precipitated. Sir John Jellicoe stood high in the Navy. What was to be done? It was arranged that the First Lord of the Admiralty, the First Sea Lord and I should have a confidential consultation talk on the position. I invited both of them and Admiral Duff, the head of the Anti-Submarine Department, to break-

fast at Downing Street on the 13th February, 1917. I submitted to them a memorandum as a basis for our discussion. This memorandum, which was prepared by Sir Maurice Hankey after several consultations we had on the subject, carefully examined the arguments for and against the adoption of the convoy system, and strongly urged that it should be put into